

REMARKS

Claim 7 is pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claim 7 are amended. Support for the amendment to claim 7 can be found at, for example, page 8, lines 17-19. The specification is amended for clarity. No new matter is added. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims in view of at least the following remarks.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Lavert during the telephone interview held May 4, 2011 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

I. Objection to the Specification

The Office Action objects to the specification. The specification is amended responsive to this objection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Claim 7 is amended responsive to this rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

The Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as having been obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0102843 to Yagi in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,969,468 to Byers et al. (hereinafter "Byers") and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0097166 to Krulevitch et al. (hereinafter "Krulevitch"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Yagi fails to disclose and would not have rendered obvious "a plurality of electrodes each of which is configured to output the electrical stimulation pulse signal, has a needle-shaped end and stick in an optic papilla of an eye before a bundle of nerve fibers exit the eye to form an optic nerve," as recited in claim 7. The Office Action admits that Yagi fails to disclose electrodes that stick in a bundle of nerve fibers of an optic papilla of the eye; however, the Office Action asserts that Byers cures the deficiencies of Yagi.

As agreed in the May 4 interview, Byers fails to cure the deficiencies of Yagi. Byers discloses an electrode array that is to be applied to body tissue to provide an effective electrical connection (col. 5, lines 60-63). However, Byers fails to disclose that the electrode array is applied to an optic papilla of the eye before a bundle of nerve fibers exit the eye to form an optic nerve. Instead, Byers discloses that the electrode array is disposed along the optic nerve or the paths where the optic nerve enters the cortex (col. 15, lines 9-11). Thus, Byers fails to disclose and would not have rendered obvious "a plurality of electrodes each of which is configured to output the electrical stimulation pulse signal, has a needle-shaped end and stick in an optic papilla of an eye before a bundle of nerve fibers exit the eye to form an optic nerve," as recited in claim 7.

Krulevitch also fails to disclose and would not have rendered obvious the above-recited features. Krulevitch discloses a video camera (51) that captures an image and sends the image to an implant (54) that includes an electrode array for stimulating retinal neurons (paragraphs [0092] and [0093]). However, Krulevitch fails to disclose that the implant (54) is connected to an optic papilla of the eye before a bundle of nerve fibers exit the eye to form an optic nerve. Instead, Krulevitch discloses that the implant (54) is connected to the retina by electrodes (paragraph [0092]). Thus, Krulevitch fails to disclose and would not have rendered obvious "a plurality of electrodes each of which is configured to output the electrical

stimulation pulse signal, has a needle-shaped end and stick in an optic papilla of the eye before a bundle of nerve fibers exit an eye to form an optic nerve," as recited in claim 7

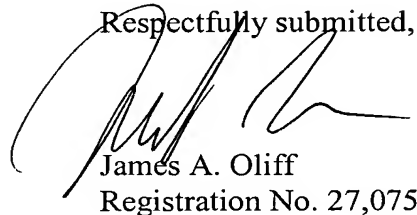
For at least these reasons, claim 7 is patentable over Yagi, Byers, and Krulevitch, alone or in combination. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Request for Continued Examination

Date: May 10, 2011

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